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TO: Hap Dunning, BDAC Work Group Assurances Chair
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FROM: Eugenia Laychak, CCPDR Project Manager
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SUBJECT: Observations from 13 December 1996 Assurances Work Group Meeting and Recommendations

The following are observations from the last Assurances Work Group meeting. Also included are recommendations for future Work Group meetings. Eugenia may be reached at 916/444-2161 (voice), 916/444-2162 (fax) or at 73130.3271@compuserve.com (e-mail) to discuss comments you may have on this memo.

ORGANIZING THE MEETING PACKET

Members of the public had some difficulty finding the appropriate document in the meeting packet in order to follow the discussion. When a document is part of the agenda item being discussed, linking that document with the specific agenda item may ease this source of confusion.

Recommendations

Label each document in a manner such as Attachment 1, Attachment 2, etc. in the top margin of the first page of the document.

On the Meeting Agenda the attachment could be associated with the agenda topic. For instance, "**Modifications of Stakeholder Concerns** - Dave Fullerton and Mike Heaton (Attachment 1)".

- When introducing the next agenda item, remind people that they will be discussing attachment number 1,2,3, etc.
- When compiling the meeting packet, place the documents in the packet in the order of the agenda.

IDENTIFICATION OF SPEAKERS/COMMENTERS

At the beginning of the meeting the chair asked all persons in the room to give their names, organizations and if there were any communications with constituents that could be delivered. This was helpful and in fact, one person, the representative from Metropolitan Water District, used the opportunity to request time for public comment later in the meeting. For newcomers, additional repetition of names and affiliations is useful. Also, it was somewhat unclear who were work group members and invited participants, as opposed to members of the public.

Recommendations

- Encourage members and invited participants to sit at the table.

- Encourage persons to pick up nameplates.

- Ask people to identify themselves and their affiliation one more time, the first time they speak in the meeting.

TRACKING DISCUSSION AND RETAINING FOCUS

The discussion, for the most part, stayed focused on the topics and questions on the agenda. During the discussion of the case study, the chair reminded the work group several times to limit their comments to pointing out gaps in the case study. He also listened and acted on the suggestions of a work group member about how to proceed with the discussion. Additionally, the meeting ran on schedule and concluded at the designated time. About half of the time, participants spoke under the chair's recognition. Continuing and increasing recognizing speakers by the chair is likely to create an opportunity for participation by those less inclined to participate.

One member of the public mentioned to Martha that he was having difficulty hearing and desired some sort of public address system in the room. Also a number of side conversations occurred during the course of the meeting. When short, these were not especially distracting. However, two or three went on for some time at which point it became more difficult to track the main discussion. The flip chart was used by staff to track part of the discussion on the case study. However, it was not used throughout the discussion. Nor was the discussion verbally summarized.

Recommendations

As the work group digs into the details of the assurance issues that the case study raises, the meeting discussion is likely to be more lively. The following are recommendations for gaining the most from the expertise of those participating with the work group.

- Continue to use the flip chart to track discussion points. In addition to being of general assistance, this may specifically help those members of the public who have trouble hearing the discussion.

- Designate a person such as staff, the chair or the process consultant to summarize discussion points. When summarizing, refer to the flip charts and ask if something was left out. Ask also if additional points need to be made.

- Continue with having the chair recognize participants before they address the group.

- Every so often ask for comments from people who have not spoken on the topic at hand.
- Remind participants that they are welcome to have side conversations outside of the meeting room. Repeat as needed.

REVISING THE CASE STUDY

As hoped, staff received a number of comments for revising the case study to better highlight assurances issues. Noting how these comments are incorporated is a way to encourage further involvement by participants.

Recommendation

- Note how comments from the work group and the public are addressed in the revised case study. While there are many ways to do this, a simple format is to place the changes in bold italics within the body of the document and to acknowledge in an introductory paragraph the rationale for the changes. This suggestion also applies to the stakeholder concerns paper.

ENCOURAGING STAKEHOLDER CONTACT WITH CONSTITUENTS

Tightening the linkage between stakeholder representatives and the persons they represent is an ongoing task. In doing so, issues that could be stumbling blocks at a later date are raised as early as possible.

Recommendation

- Continue telephone contact with work group members and invited participants between meetings. Specifically ask if they have heard any "rumblings" or suggestions from their colleagues.

NEXT STEP

- Decide whether the meeting discussion will be verbally summarized, and if so, and by whom.